

Message Text

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16

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-14 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-10

SCI-06 OMB-01 PA-04 PRS-01 DODE-00 PM-07 SPC-03 AGR-20

L-03 DRC-01 /123 W

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R 190726Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7701

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR BM

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - TRIAL OF LO HSING-HAN

REF: RANGOON 268

1. SUMMARY. TRIAL OF OPIUM TRAFFICKER LO HSING-HAN CONTINUED WITH THREE SESSIONS HELD SINCE REPORT IN REFTEL. TESTIMONY WAS GIVEN PRIMARILY BY FORMER MEMBERS OF LO'S KHAKWEYEI (KKY) OR SELF-DEFENSE FORCE AND BROUGHT TO LIGHT COLLUSION WITH JIMMY YANG, FORMER KOKANGESE LEADER AND CURRENTLY UNDER DETENTION IN BANGKOK, AS WELL AS EMPHASIZING LO'S SERIOUS INVOLVEMENT IN GOLD AND JADE SMUGGLING. THE TRIAL ALSO CONTINUES TO PRODUCE DISCLOSURES AS A RESULT OF WHICH SEVERAL POLICE, MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, AND ARMY OFFICERS MAY BE PURGED. END SUMMARY.

2. LO'S FAILURE TO DISBAND HIS KKY HAS BEEN THE GENERAL THRUST OF MOST TRIAL SESSIONS, BUT ONE WITNESS, HSU WAN-LON, A FORMER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KKY OFFICER, SLANTED OFF AND GAVE DAMAGING TESTIMONY AGAINST

JIMMY YANG. YANG, OF WHOM LO IS A PROTEGE, HAS BEEN MENTIONED PROMINENTLY IN SEVERAL TRIAL SESSIONS, ALWAYS DEPICTED AS VILLAIN AND A CATALYST TO MANY OF THE PROBLEMS LATER CAUSED BY THE KKY. PERIPHERAL TARGETS -- GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, BURMA ARMY OFFICERS AND DISSIDENTS SUCH AS YANG RECEIVED NEARLY THE SAME ATTENTION GIVEN TO LO.

3. CROSS-EXAMINATION, WHICH HAS BEEN ASSIDUOUSLY CONDUCTED BY DR. U E MAUNG, DID REVEAL THAT LO ORDERED A 130-MAN KKY GROUP FROM LASHIO TO SURRENDER TO THE GOVERNMENT, GAINING SOME FAVOR FOR LO, BUT DURING THE SAME SESSION EXTENSIVE TESTIMONY WAS DEVOTED TO LO'S OPIUM TRAFFICKING. THE MECHANISMS AND NUMBERS OF SEVERAL CARAVANS WERE DESCRIBED, INCLUDING A STATEMENT THAT THE THIRD CARAVAN SENT DOWN TO THE BURMA-THAILAND BORDER CONSISTED OF OVER 800 MULES.

4. LATER TESTIMONY, GIVEN BY A FORMER MEMBER OF LO'S KKY, AD-DRESSED ITSELF TO LO'S SMUGGLING OF GOLD AND JADE, IMPORTANT TO THE TRIAL SINCE LO IS CHARGED WITH ECONOMIC CRIMES AND HIS SMUGGLING OF NATURAL RESOURCES WILL ULTIMATELY CARRY MORE WEIGHT THAN THE NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. AS HAS BEEN THE CASE THROUGHOUT THE TRIAL, WITNESSES CONTINUED TO NAME MINOR OFFICIALS WHO COLLABORATED OR ACCEPTED BRIBES TO ALLOW LO'S CARAVANS TO PASS OR TO ALLOW THE USE OF AIRCRAFT FOR SMUGGLING PURPOSES.

5. WITNESSES ALSO CONTINUED TO MAKE LO HSING-MIN APPEAR COMPARATIVELY HONEST AND COOPERATIVE WITH THE GOVERNMENT. REFERENCE IS MADE OFTEN TO EFFORTS OF THIS YOUNGER BROTHER OF LO HSING-HAN TO CONVINCE LO AND THE KKY TO DISBAND. ONE WITNESS IN MOST RECENT SESSION DID TESTIFY, HOWEVER, THAT LO HSING-MIN TRADED IN OPIUM AND LIQUOR IN TACHILEK. THE WITNESS NAMED SEVERAL OPIUM BUYERS FROM THAILAND AND BURMA AT THIS POINT, BUT NEWSPAPER COVERAGE DID NOT REVEAL THEIR IDENTITIES.

6. NEXT SESSION SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 20.

7. NEWSPAPER COVERAGE CONTINUES PROMINENT.
LACEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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